



February 2009 Newsletter

Information Resource Center (IRC)

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February is Black History Month in the United States

Presidential Proclamation on National African American History Month

Obama honors unique, rich heritage of African Americans

The history of African Americans is unique and rich, and one that has helped to define what it means to be an American. Arriving on ships on the shores of North America more than 300 years ago, recognized more as possessions than people, African Americans have come to know the freedoms fought for in establishing the United States and gained through the use of our founding principles of freedom of speech, freedom of the press, the right to assembly, and due process of law. The ideals of the Founders became more real and more true for every citizen as African Americans pressed us to realize our full potential as a Nation and to uphold those ideals for all who enter into our borders and embrace the notion that we are all endowed with certain unalienable rights. [Read more](#)

الرئيس أوباما يعلن شهر شباط/فبراير شهر الأميركيين الأفارقة

بيان من رئيس الولايات المتحدة الأميركية

إن تاريخ الأميركيين الأفارقة هو تاريخ فريد من نوعه وغني، وهو تاريخ ساهم في تعريف ما يعنيه أن يكون المرء أميركياً. الأميركيون الأفارقة الذين وصلوا إلى سواحل أميركا الشمالية قبل أكثر من 300 عام، والذين كان ينظر إليهم كمجرد ممتلكات أكثر منهم بشراً، صاروا ينعمون بالحريات التي اكتسبت عبر الكفاح الطويل في تأسيس الولايات المتحدة واكتسبت من خلال استخدام مبادئ آبائنا المؤسسين لحرية الكلام وحرية الصحافة وحرية الاجتماع والإجراءات القضائية المرعية. كما أن المثل العليا للآباء المؤسسين أصبحت أكثر حقيقية وفعالية بالنسبة لكل مواطن فيما واصل الأميركيون الأفارقة حثاً بقوة على أن نحقق كامل إمكاناتنا كأمة، وأن نلتزم بتلك المثل لكل من يدخل حدودنا، ونحتضن فكرة أن الله وهبنا جميعاً حقوقاً معينة غير قابلة للتصرف.

[اقرأ المزيد](#)

Black History Month Honors Legacy of Struggle and Triumph

Obama inauguration significant as African Americans honored in February



A man and his son see the bus in which Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat in 1955, a landmark moment in the civil rights movement.

Each February, Black History Month honors the struggles and triumphs of millions of American citizens as well as their contributions to the nation's cultural and political life. Above, now in a museum, is the bus in which Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat in 1955.

In 2009, the inauguration of Barack Obama, America's first African-American president, lends Black History Month a special significance. Obama took the oath of office January 20, the day after Americans honored the memory of Martin Luther King Jr. with a federal holiday and national day of service. The late civil rights leader would have turned 80 on January 15. [Read more](#)

شهر تاريخ الأميركيين الأفارقة يروي ملحمة الصبر والعزيمة ثم النصر

تسليط الضوء في شهر شباط/فبراير من كل عام على إسهامات المواطنين السود للولايات المتحدة

استحدث كارتر وودسون شهر تاريخ السود في العام 1926.

يروى شهر تاريخ السود في شباط/فبراير من كل عام الصراعات والانتصارات التي خاضها وحققها ملايين المواطنين الأميركيين في وجه أصعب العراقيل، العبودية والتحييز والفقر، وينفحص في ما قدموه من إسهامات لحياة البلد الثقافية والسياسية.



ويمثل العام 2007 الاحتفال السنوي الـ81 منذ استحداث العالم والمؤرخ المرموق، كارتر وودسون، أسبوع تاريخ الزنوج في العام 1926. وقد اختار آنذاك الأسبوع الثاني من شهر شباط/فبراير ليتزامن الاحتفال مع تاريخ ميلادي الرئيس إبراهيم لنكولن وداعية إلغاء الرق في القرن التاسع عشر فريدريك دوغلاس. [اقرأ المزيد](#)

Learn more about Black History month:

[2009 Presidential Proclamation](#)

[The ASALH: Founders of Black History Month](#)

[Eric Holder: First Black Attorney General](#)

[U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Susan Rice](#)

[USTR-Designate Ron Kirk](#)

[African American to Lead Republican Party](#)

Publications: [Free At Last - The U.S. Civil Rights Movement](#)

Publications: [Justice for All: The Legacy of Thurgood Marshall](#)

Poster Show: [American Leaders in Civil Rights](#)

Meet the Secretary of State:



Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Term of Appointment: 01/21/2009 to present

On January 21, 2009, Hillary Rodham Clinton was sworn in as the 67th Secretary of State of the United States. Secretary Clinton joined the State Department after nearly four decades in public service as an advocate, attorney, First Lady, and Senator.

Secretary Clinton was born in Chicago, Illinois on October 26, 1947 to Dorothy Rodham and the late Hugh Rodham.

She attended local public schools before graduating from Wellesley College and Yale Law School, where she met Bill Clinton. In 1974, Secretary Clinton moved to Arkansas, a year later then married Bill Clinton and became a successful attorney while also raising their daughter, Chelsea. She was an assistant professor at the University of Arkansas School of Law, and after working to strengthen the local legal aid office, she was appointed by President Jimmy Carter in 1977 to serve on the board of the Legal Services Corporation, which she later chaired. [Read more](#)

سيرة حياة هيلاري رودام كلينتون

وزيرة خارجية الولايات المتحدة الأميركية

في 21 كانون الثاني/يناير، 2009، أقسمت هيلاري رودام كلينتون اليمين الدستورية لتولي منصب وزير الخارجية السابع والسبعين للولايات المتحدة. وقد انضمت الوزيرة كلينتون الى وزارة الخارجية بعد أن قضت حوالي 4 عقود في الخدمة العامة داعية، ومحامية، والسيدة الأولى لولاية أركنساو والولايات المتحدة، وعضوة في مجلس الشيوخ.

ولدت هيلاري رودام في شيكاغو، بولاية إيلينوي، يوم 26 تشرين الأول/أكتوبر، 1947، ابنة لدوروثي وهيو رودام. والتحق بالمدارس الحكومية المحلية قبل أن تتخرج من كلية وليزلي وكلية الحقوق لجامعة ييل حيث تعرفت على بيل كلينتون. وفي العام 1974 إنتقلت هيلاري الى ولاية أركنساو وبعد ذلك بعام إنتترنت ببيل كلينتون وأصبحت محامية لامية وأما مربية لإبنتهما تشيلسي. وشغلت منصب مساعدة أستاذ بكلية الحقوق لجامعة أركنساو بعد أن عملت لتعزيز مكتب المعونات القانونية المحلي. وفي العام 1977 أسند اليها الرئيس الأسبق جيمي كارتر منصبا في مؤسسة الخدمات القانونية الذي ترأسته لاحقا. [اقرأ المزيد](#)

Web Chats



Web chats are online, text-based discussions that allow audiences outside the United States to interact with American citizens on a wide range of topics. U.S. government and private sector subject experts, academics, journalists, and everyday citizens are brought on as guests to do web chats on USINFO.

To participate, you only need a computer with Internet access and a browser. There is no special software to be downloaded.

What Obama's Election Says About America

Date & Time:

February 17, 2009 at 4 p.m. Syria Time

The election of President Obama signified a historic shift as Americans selected an African-American for the highest position in the U.S. government. Join noted journalist and political analyst Juan Williams on February 17 for an online discussion of the significance of the election and what it says about America today.

Juan Williams is a leading news analyst and reporter for National Public Radio (NPR). He appears regularly on NPR's *Morning Edition* and *Day to Day*, speaking on a range of issues. In addition to a 21-year career as a writer and reporter for *The Washington Post*, he received an Emmy award for television documentary writing for his work on the series that included "Politics — the New Black Power." He is also a prolific author, most recently publishing *Enough*, a book that explores the "culture of failure" that exists in today's African-American community.

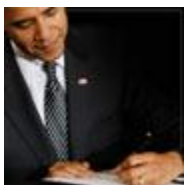
This webchat will take place at <http://statedept.connectsolutions.com/culture>. No registration is needed. Simply choose "Enter as a Guest," type in your preferred screen name and join the discussion.

Blogs *at* America.gov

Blogs at America.gov offers readers a place to join in conversation on variety of topics with experts from the United States and around the world. We encourage you to share your thoughts with our bloggers and fellow readers in the comments section of each post. Click on the title in red to go to the website.

First 100 Days: Following Barack Obama

By Michelle Austein Brooks



First 100 Days will follow President Obama's initiatives and policy directions. We'll look at new presidential orders, policies on the economy, alternative energy and foreign affairs, and his use of new media. We'll review the new president's progress and governing style, take a look at the challenges of governing the United States, and keep you informed about the fun moments as well. We encourage you to share your thoughts on the president's job.

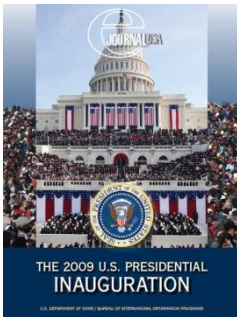


E-Journal USA:

A monthly electronic journal available in multiple languages about U.S. foreign affairs and U.S. society and culture.

إي جورنال يو إس إيه:

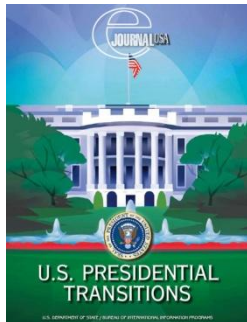
مجلة إلكترونية شهرية تصدر بعدة لغات تتناول شؤون الولايات المتحدة الخارجية والمجتمع الأمريكي وثقافته.



The 2009 U.S. Presidential Inauguration

The citizens of the United States enthusiastically celebrated the inauguration of their 44th president in January 2009. The peaceful transfer of power always renews faith in the strength of democracy, but in 2009 the rise of an African-American to the nation's highest office also gave reason for pride at the nation's repudiation of the segregation and slavery in its past. President Barack Obama called it a day when Americans chose "hope over fear." [Inside this publication](#)

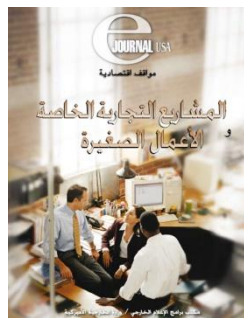
[Arabic version](#)



U.S. Presidential Transitions

We often read or hear about turmoil before, during, or after elections around the world. An important characteristic of democracy in the United States, however, is the regularly recurring peaceful transfer of power from one president to the next. Americans know when the next presidential election will take place – the Tuesday after the first Monday in November every four years. And power will be transferred to the newly elected (or re-elected) president on January 20 of the following year. [Inside this publication](#)

[Arabic version](#)



المشاريع التجارية الخاصة بالأعمال الصغيرة

شركات الأعمال الصغيرة في الولايات المتحدة في أول قرن من تأسيس الدولة. واليوم تقدم شركات الأعمال الصغيرة بمرونتها دروساً لشركات الأعمال الكبيرة. وتساهم شركات الأعمال الصغيرة في الاقتصاد الأمريكي ليس فقط في مجال الإبداع والتكيف، بل تساهم أيضاً في توفير فرص العمل للنساء والأقليات وفي المناطق التي تعاني من الركود الاقتصادي. [في هذه المطبوعة](#)

التجربة الأولمبية



يكمن المعنى الحقيقي للأولمبياد في بعض القيم الانسانية الشاملة، في الكفاح الانساني المشترك في سبيل التفوق وفي التفاني للسعي وراء هدف معين في حياتنا. ولكل رياضي مشارك في الأولمبياد قصته وتجربته الخاصة. في هذا العدد من إي جورنال يو إس آيه، يكشف أبطال أولمبيون سابقون في سرد قصصهم، عن الجهد الذي كان عليهم بذله قبل بلوغهم لحظات المجد، وعن الانتصارات الصغيرة وخيبات الأمل التي تترافق مع ذلك. [في هذه المطبوعة](#)

Sports

Baseball, Once Just an American Game, Extends Reach Worldwide



Foreign-born baseball players star in the United States as the sport continues to flourish overseas. About 30 percent of Major League Baseball players were born outside the United States. [Read more](#)

Jackie Robinson: Breaking the Color Barrier



By breaking baseball's color barrier, Jackie Robinson made it easier for civil rights leaders like Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King to work for an end to segregation and to fight for racial equality. [Read more](#)

الرواد الأوائل من الأميركيين السود أثروا رياضة كرة المضرب في الولايات المتحدة

ألثيا غيبسون وآرثر آش حطما حاجز اللون في ميدان كرة المضرب

قبل العام 1950 كانت لعبة كرة المضرب للمحترفين في الولايات المتحدة عرضة لبلاء الفصل العنصري وكان تنافس الأميركيين السود محصورا في حدود جمعية كرة المضرب الأميركية. الا أن لاعبين أسودين هما ألثيا غيبسون (1927-2003) وآرثر آش (1943-1993) بدلا ذلك الوضع بفعل مهارتهما المميزتين وإصرارهما الدؤوب.

[اقرأ المزيد](#)

Photo Gallery *and* Videos

Offering an audio-visual tour of the stories and issues shaping our world, the photo gallery and videos are two of many invaluable services "America.gov" site offers for its audience. Both, the gallery and videos can be browsed by the following subjects: Foreign Policy, U.S. Politics, American Life, Democracy, Science and Health.

Photo Gallery: Please visit the below galleries or go to the photo gallery direct link to see more photo collections.

<http://www.america.gov/multimedia/photogallery.html#7a78bf28-e356-4d21-a311-0c218ec8f6f8>

Science & Health:



[Marine Conservation](#)

American Life:



[Community Colleges Train Tomorrow's Workforce](#)

American Life:



[U.S. First Lady Michelle Obama](#)

Videos: Please point the mouse on any picture then use "Ctrl" key and click on the link to take you to the video you want to watch or go to the link below to see all the video collection.

<http://www.america.gov/multimedia/video.html?playerId=1475282956>



[Diversity: Our Multiracial American Family](#)
2:09



[President's Plan for AIDS Relief](#)
4:02



[Entrepreneurship](#)
1:10

Websites of Interest

Academic Earth: Thousands of video lectures from the World's top scholars.

<http://www.academicearth.org>

The Encyclopedia of Life: an ambitious project to organize and make available via the Internet virtually all information about life present on Earth. Content ranging from historical literature and biological descriptions to stunning images, videos and distribution maps.

<http://www.eol.org>

Education Portal: Best free software downloads for students.

http://education-portal.com/articles/Best_Free_Software_Downloads_for_Students.html

National Journal Magazine: National Journal magazine has been part of the political reporting and analysis landscape since 1969. Working with a team of crack reporters, they "provide foresight and insight to Washington's corridors of influence on a weekly basis."

<http://www.nationaljournal.com/njmagazine/>

Arts

Baltimore Orchestra Performs Tribute to Martin Luther King Jr.



Marin Alsop, artistic director of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, conducts a performance.

Baltimore — Since the untimely death of Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968, the slain civil rights leader's life, words and philosophy have found their way into the public consciousness of Americans and others through various artistic disciplines. Books, plays, films and dance have commemorated King's career and values. [Read more](#)

Quick Fact!



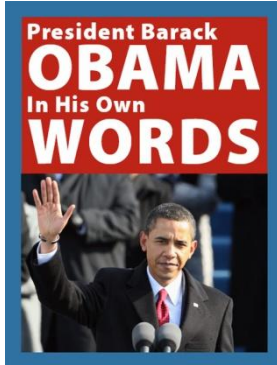
Air and Simple Gifts, composed by John Williams for President Obama's inauguration, was performed by violinist Itzhak Perlman, cellist Yo-Yo Ma, clarinetist Anthony McGill and pianist Gabriela Montero. [Listen](#)

Did you know?



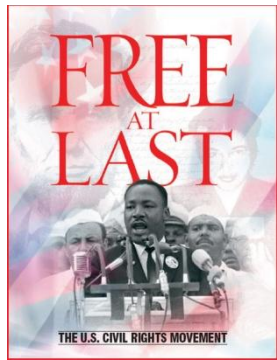
The National Medal of Arts and National Humanities Medal embody America's America's cultural diversity. Among the 2008 recipients: actress Olivia de Havilland, sculptor Jesus Moroles, scholar Gabor Boritt, and the Fisk University Jubilee Singers.

Publications



Obama in His Own Words

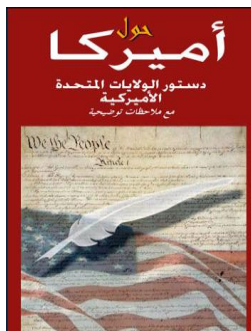
These pages share President Obama's words with our global readership. This book includes the complete text of the 44th President's Inaugural Address. Also featured are extended excerpts from eight other significant campaign and pre-presidential speeches. It is our hope that while the book itself is small, readers will discover that the vision captured in its pages is large. [Inside this publication](#)



Free At Last - The U.S. Civil Rights Movement

This book recounts how African-American slaves and their descendants struggled to win — both in law and in practice — the civil rights enjoyed by other Americans. It is a story of dignified persistence and struggle, a story that produced great heroes and heroines, and one that ultimately succeeded by forcing Americans to confront squarely the shameful gap between their universal principles of equality and justice and the inequality, injustice, and oppression faced by millions of their fellow citizens.

[Inside this publication](#)



دستور الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية

تتناول هذه المطبوعة المصورة نص دستور الولايات المتحدة كاملا (التمهيد، المواد السبع، والتعديلات الـ 27)، كما تتضمن مقدمة محدثة وملاحظات تفسيرية كتبها ج. دبليو. بيلتاسوم، مؤلف كتاب فهم الشعب للدستور والحكومة. تتضمن المقدمة أقساما تشرح كيف حدد الدستور نظام الولايات المتحدة الفدرالية، وخلفية عن المؤتمر الدستوري، وكيف وصل المشاركون إلى الاتفاق على النسخة النهائية من الوثيقة، والمصادقة عليها وأقسامها عن الدعوة إلى وضع وثيقة الحقوق والحاجة إلى تعديلات إضافية على مدى السنين. [في هذه المطبوعة](#)

American Holidays

Presidents' Day

Washington's Birthday Holiday Honors First President

George Washington served as military, civilian leader



This portrait of General George Washington hangs in Washington College's Custom House in Chestertown, Maryland. Every February, America honors the legacy of this surveyor from Virginia who became commander of the Continental Army, chairman of the Constitutional Convention, and the first president of the United States of America. (© AP Images)

Washington -- Americans long have honored George Washington, commander of the United States armies in the War of Independence, first president of the United States, and "first in the hearts of his countrymen."

During the Revolutionary War, Washington's small band of soldiers faced a well-equipped professional army, but he led his often ragged forces to victory in the face of incredible hardships.

Washington enjoyed nearly universal respect, not least for spurning all offers of political power at the moment of his military triumph (1781), choosing instead to return to his Mount Vernon, Virginia, farm. The drafters of the new Constitution in 1787 were willing to afford the executive branch greater powers because they anticipated that Washington, who could be counted on not to abuse his office, would serve as the chief executive, and would establish important precedents for his successors.

The most popular figure in America at the end of his second four-year term, Washington again decided to relinquish power, establishing an informal eight-year limit later formalized by the 22nd Amendment to the Constitution (1951).



This portrait of Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president, was painted by Dwight D. Eisenhower, the 34th president. Because a number of states celebrate the birthday of President Lincoln (February 12), many Americans believe the third Monday of February is a consolidated Washington-Lincoln "Presidents' Day." Merchants across the nation offer Presidents' Day sales. (© AP Images)

It has been said that the American people themselves forced Congress to establish the Washington's Birthday holiday, which today is fixed by law on the third Monday of February. Nineteenth-century Americans commonly celebrated a holiday on February 22, the day of Washington's birth. Apparently

motivated by chronic employee absenteeism on that date, Congress in 1879 declared Washington's Birthday a legal public holiday.

In 1971, Congress fixed Washington's Birthday and a number of other holidays on Mondays, to create long holiday weekends. Because a number of states (but not the federal government) also officially celebrate the February 12 birthday of Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president, many Americans have come to believe -- incorrectly -- that the third Monday of February is a consolidated "Presidents' Day" honoring both Washington and Lincoln, and indeed all U.S. presidents. Many states designate the holiday as Presidents' Day, and merchants offer Presidents' Day sales.

The federal holiday, however, remains Washington's Birthday. It is but one way in which Americans celebrate the life of the man often called the "father of his country." The 555-foot-high (169-meter) Washington Monument, dedicated in 1885, dominates the skyline of the nation's capital, Washington, D.C. A 60-foot-high (18-meter) likeness of Washington was carved in stone (completed in 1941) on South Dakota's Mount Rushmore, along with those of Presidents Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt.

In 1976, Congress posthumously promoted Washington to the rank of six-star general of the armies, assuring that he would continue to outrank all other members of the military, now and in the future.

Finance and Economy Corner

Finance and Economy Corner is a new feature of IRC newsletter which is a selection of articles, studies and analysis driven from U.S. Polls and Think Tank organizations.

United States Economic Crisis:

Short and Long-Run Fiscal Challenges - ... adding to the uncertainty is the fact that before the current crisis Americans were consuming and borrowing too much, while saving too little. We had become an over-mortgaged, over-leveraged society dependent on the inflow of foreign credit. If recovery from this recession is to be solid and sustainable, we must stop living beyond our means...

Buy American Hurts America - ... Advocates of Buy American rules claim that limiting competition for U.S. government contracts to domestic firms will protect U.S. jobs and help prop up firms in troubled industries. Regrettably, the cost of such protectionism will be inflicted on the American public, who will fail to get the best value for their hard-earned taxpayer dollars...

Economic Stimulus: Issues and Policies - The need for additional fiscal stimulus depends on the state of the economy... Fiscal policy temporarily stimulates the economy through an increase in spending which also, if not offset by increases in revenue, increases the budget deficit... Economists generally agree that spending proposals are somewhat more stimulative than tax cuts since part of a tax cut may be saved by the recipients.



How Smart?

Portland's success in arresting suburban sprawl has brought it many accolades and ... new residents. Now, it faces the challenge of making its quality lifestyle available to more people. [Read more](#)

مدينة أميركية نموذجية تحد من تمدد الضواحي وتوسعها

ولكن هل سيمكن لذوي الدخل المحدود التمتع بمدينة بورتلاند مع غلاء الأسعار؟

من السهل إدراك سبب احتلال مدينة بورتلاند، بولاية أوريغون، منزلة مرموقة بين المدن الأميركية، بما فيها اللوائح التي تضم أسماء المدن الصديقة للبيئة أكثر من غيرها والمدن الأفضل لنشوء الأحداث فيها. [اقرأ المزيد](#)



Spending Vs. Saving

In the United States, consumer spending makes up just more than 70 percent of gross domestic product, which measures a nation's economy. The U.S. savings rate is the lowest in the world. Here's a look at how U.S. spending and savings compare with other large economies. [Read more](#)

Nations Plan More than \$1 Trillion in Stimulus Spending

Governments around the globe are taking steps to encourage consumer spending and economic expansion. Through increasing public spending, offering tax breaks and bolstering consumer confidence, they hope to bring a quick end to economic recessions many countries are experiencing and thereby restore world economic growth. [Read more](#)

بلدان العالم تنوي رصد ما يزيد على تريليون دولار للإنفاق التحفيزي

هل سيؤول البرنامج العالمي الجديد الى رفع إنفاق المستهلكين؟

تعكف مختلف الحكومات في العالم على إتخاذ خطوات ترمي الى تشجيع الإنفاق والتوسع الإقتصادي. فمن خلال زيادة الإنفاق العام وتقديم إعفاءات ضريبية وتعزيز ثقة المستهلكين، تأمل هذه البلدان في وضع نهاية سريعة للركود الإقتصادي الذي طال بلدانا عديدة، وبالتالي استعادة النمو الإقتصادي العالمي.

وبأتي على رأس قائمة التدابير مقاومة أكبر تدن في إنفاق المستهلكين الأميركيين منذ العام 1980. [اقرأ المزيد](#)